

No Small Stir

WHAT THE POPE REALLY SAID ABOUT THE GREAT WAR

By "DIPLOMATICUS," A MEMBER OF THE
ANGLICAN CHURCH

*"Now, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir
among the soldiers, what was become of Peter."—
Acts xii:18.*

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and Paul, London.)*

A FEW weeks after the outbreak of the European war it was possible to buy in London from street-hawkers and religious tract-sellers ingenious pamphlets offering to prove that the times of distress foretold in the Apocalypse were at hand. Thus the "beast full of names and blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns" was, if we remember rightly, the German Emperor with his tributary States and Allies, while the woman sitting upon the beast and "drunken with the blood of the Saints" was the Papacy, partner in Germany's iniquities.

This conjunction of two Powers, who seemed *prima facie* to have nothing to do with each other, at first surprised the reader and then made him smile. It was indeed hard to be angry with productions which had the quaintness of "Milestones" and other comedies of the crinoline epoch. Was it possible that the age of Dr. Cumming and Mr. Gosse the elder had not passed away completely after all? Wise readers did not burn these tracts; they put them on a shelf with other literary curiosities.

But, as the weeks of the war became months, and the months lengthened into years, something rather like the

chupatti movement that preceded the Indian Mutiny began to make itself felt in the countries of the Allies and especially in England. It was no longer necessary to go to obscure religious fanatics to be told that the Pope, the old "triple tyrant," was necessarily in the service of the enemy. The crimes of the Papacy were beginning to be on everybody's lips, and it was plain that we were once more in face of what the vernacular has taught us to call a "stunt." "The pro-German Vatican!" was aspiring to take the place of "Business as Usual!" "Single Men First!" and other earlier war-cries. Liberal Deans proclaimed it with melancholy satisfaction; Guild Socialists distractedly deplored it; even Anglo-Catholic priests, to the horror of their flocks, preached sermons on it, and afterwards printed them. Experts in foreign politics reminded us in reviews that they had always said so; free-thinking associations circularized a Europe that might be in danger of forgetting it; High Church organs apologized to their correspondents because for a moment they had seemed to doubt it. One long lamentation assailed the ear all day. It was like being button-holed by some voluble individual, and forced to give heed to the following discourse:

"Isn't it shocking that the Pope is so pro-German? It's the old idea of the Holy Roman Empire again. His fearful personal ambition makes him want to lay all Europe at the feet of the Austrian Kaiser. And when I say Austria, of course I mean Germany—they're the same thing today, aren't they? Wilhelm is simply dying to be Holy Roman Emperor. I know he calls himself a Protestant, but he paid several visits to the Vatican before the war, and that *proves* he is thinking of turning Catholic. The Pope is really bound to support him because the Papacy supports despotism everywhere. Look how it has always fought against the Russian Church and the authority of the Tsar! We know, of course, what the Pope thinks of us, and as for poor Italy he wants to tear her to pieces and reign over the whole peninsula as he used to before eighteen hundred and something or other.

What's that you say? 'The Papacy is neutral in this war?' *It is:* that's the shame of it. The greatest moral crisis in history, and the Pope daren't take sides! He never even stopped the German army from marching into Belgium. Don't you know that the Vatican Council made him infallible in all things?—(aside) I wonder if you'll swallow that?—Well, he certainly hasn't shown much infallibility this time, has he? He stands apart and does nothing, and I hope that it'll teach everyone not to put up with any more of his interference in politics."

We hope the exponents of views similar to these will not think us too unfair. Honestly, we have never yet read any statement of their case that seemed to us much less incoherent. We exonerate entirely the many people who have been misled by those who might have had access, had they cared, to the real sources of evidence. Neither do we wish to press hardly on those whose patriotic apprehensions made them for a time incapable of balancing evidence. In fact, instead of blaming anybody, we propose to straighten out the Anti-Papalist's tangled skein of allegations and judge of each, dispassionately, on its merits. For this purpose the charges may be summarized as follows: (1) The Pope had no right to remain neutral in the present conflict. (2) Even if we pardon his neutrality, we have still to complain that it was a neutrality unfavorable to the Allies and favorable to the Central Powers. In particular the Vatican has shut its eyes to the wrong done to Belgium and (3) has plotted against Italy. (4) The Vatican is intriguing to restore the Holy Roman Empire. (5) The ideals of the Vatican are essentially in harmony with the theories of Prussia, and essentially in discord with the policy and maxims of the Entente. Keeping, so far as the argument will allow, to the above order, we will proceed to discuss these statements one by one.

1. THE NEUTRALITY OF THE HOLY SEE

The Roman Pontiff is the supreme head of a great religious communion, the members of which live dis-

persed among all the nations of the earth. There is no State of any importance today which does not count numerous Roman Catholics among its subjects. It follows that if the Pope in policy or war were to support any one Power or group of Powers against their opponents, he would be favoring one section of the Church at the expense of another.

It can scarcely, therefore, need argument to prove that at all times political neutrality is required of the Holy See, on grounds of elementary justice, not to say necessity. An exception may be imagined in the case of a *religious* war, i. e. a war in which the rights or existence of Catholicism as such were at stake. The present conflict, however, is not of that nature. It would show too great an ignorance of political realities to imagine that the Central Empires went to war for or against the Catholic Church, or for any purpose other than the acquisition of territory. As for the Entente, Protestant and anti-clerical influences have fortunately not succeeded so far in making the crusade against Prussianism a campaign against the Catholic religion. We may, then, dismiss the notion that this is a religious war, and assert that it is in consequence a struggle of the kind in which neutrality is demanded by the principles of the Holy See.

But this conclusion fails to satisfy all objectors. We are often reminded that in the Middle Ages the Popes were in some sense the arbiters of right and wrong in Europe. "Who," it is asked, "is better fitted to vindicate justice than the head of the largest and most powerful of the Christian communities? Even if no religious principle is at stake, morality has at least been outraged by Germany. Let the Pope begin by denouncing that, and we shall be all the more ready to accept his decision on other matters afterwards." This argument is certainly a very strong one, *if those who employ it are ready to stand by their premises*. Are they willing to restore the Pope to the position he held in the Middle Ages and to something more—for it was only with difficulty that he enforced his will even then? Which of those who

blame the Pope for not arbitrating is prepared to accept him unreservedly in the rôle of arbitrator? We confess that very few of the Pope's critics seem to us to be in the habit of obeying him as a general rule. He may be pardoned, surely, for not knowing how many anticlericals, Protestants, and Anglicans were secretly hanging on his words. They have dissembled their love so well for so many years.

Moreover, if the Pope were to have come forward as arbitrator, it was necessary that not private individuals but the Governments concerned should invite him to undertake the office, and agree to accept his award. Did they? Did any one of them? It is surely exorbitant to maintain that the Holy See, uninvited and unassured of a welcome, should have intervened on the outbreak of hostilities with some fulminating encyclical directed, say, against the Central Powers, which would have imposed upon millions of Catholic soldiers in the very agony of mobilization the cruel task of choosing between their loyalty to their Church and their loyalty to their country. Such an act would have been as uncharitable as it would have been senseless, quite apart from the fact that an arbitrator is bound to undertake a long and impartial study of the pleas advanced by both sides. Neither then nor since has the Pope had the material for such an investigation. We in England have, of course, a general conviction of the rightness of our cause, but an arbitrator requires not a general conviction but a point-by-point proof. Evidence of that kind as to the origins and character of the war will never be forthcoming till the chancelleries of Europe consent to unlock their secrets. Benedict XV is, therefore, fully justified when, after referring to his efforts to alleviate the sufferings caused by the war, he concludes:

"To do more, today, is not in the power given Us by Our Apostolic charge." ("The Pope on the War and Peace," p. 10.) He cannot do more *today*. In a saner Europe, restored to the unity of the Faith, he might do very much more indeed. The way is plain for those who

desire the arbitration of the Pope. They see that his power is too weak, let them labor to strengthen it.

2. WHAT HAS THE CHARACTER OF PAPAL NEUTRALITY BEEN?

It is not enough to vindicate the Pope's right to neutrality, as we have tried to do in the last section. It is necessary to prove in addition that he has been genuinely neutral, for the contention of his enemies is that his neutrality has been a mask under which he has labored to assist the Central Powers. This accusation is difficult to meet, like all charges which are totally devoid of evidence. It rests upon unverifiable assertions about the Germanophil and Austrophil conduct of unnamed "Vatican functionaries," and only maintains itself by the support of the great axiom that a Vatican prelate is guilty until he is proved to be innocent. The one official Pontifical act that can colorably be interpreted as friendly to Austria is the trivial episode of the protest against the confiscation of the official Roman residence of the Austrian Ambassador to the Holy See. This confiscation was only justified by those responsible for it on the ground of "reprisals," and the question of reprisals, as our own experience in England has shown, always gives rise to differences of opinion.

Accordingly, in the absence of *positive* proof of Germanophil acts committed by the Vatican, its adversaries have to fall back upon the negative evidence of acts of omission. If the Pope has not praised the Central Powers, it is argued, he has at least neglected to blame them. That is enough to show his partiality. In especial, he has been completely silent about Belgium, and has found no word to say against the violation of its neutrality or the outrages committed against priests and people during the invasion and occupation. This is undoubtedly the trump card in our opponent's hand. "The Pope has said nothing on behalf of Belgium." Has he not? Let us see.

(a) On January 22, 1915, Benedict XV addressed an Allocution to his Cardinals in Consistory. In the course of it he said: Whilst not inclining to either party in the struggle, we occupy Ourselves equally on behalf of both; and at the same time we follow with anxiety and anguish the awful phases of this war, *and even fear that sometimes the violence of attack exceeded all measure.* We are struck with the respectful attachment to the common Father of the Faithful; *an example of which is seen in regard to Our beloved people of Belgium,* as referred to in the letter which We recently addressed to the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines. ("The Pope on the War," etc., p. 11. Italics ours.)

It will be complained that this utterance is vague and ambiguous in form. This would scarcely, we think, be the view of those who appreciate the conventions of diplomatic language, but fortunately we are not left without a much plainer statement.

(b) In June, 1915, there took place the celebrated "Latapie incident." The facts of it were briefly these. M. Louis Latapie, a French journalist, was granted an interview with his Holiness on behalf of the newspaper *Liberté*. On June 22 he published his impressions of the audience, concerning which it is only necessary to recall that, to the huge delectation of anti-Papalists in England and elsewhere, they conveyed the idea that the Pope found very little to criticize in the conduct of Germany, and a great deal to complain of in the policy of Great Britain. Naturally these "revelations" had a wild success, and the ghost of M. Latapie has not yet ceased to squeak and gibber in the séances of the "No-Popery" energumens. The sequel to his performance has somehow attracted less attention. We will give it in full.

About three weeks after the publication of M. Latapie's statements (July 11), the Pope replied, in answer to an enquiry from the Archbishop of Paris: "We refuse all authority to the interview. *M. Latapie has in his article reproduced neither Our thought nor Our words,* and he published it without any revision or authorization on Our

part, despite the promise he made." ("The Pope on the War," p. 13. *Italics ours.*)

This effectively disposed of M. Latapie. But far more impressive than this *démenti* was a document enclosed with the Pope's letter to the Archbishop. This was a copy of a note addressed by Cardinal Gasparri, the Papal Secretary of State, to M. Van den Heuvel, the Belgian Minister at the Vatican. These are the Cardinal's words: "*The violation of the neutrality of Belgium, carried out by Germany, on the admission of her own Chancellor, contrary to international law, was certainly one of 'those injustices' which the Holy Father in his Consistorial Allocution of January 22 'strongly reprobates'.*" (See *Tablet*, July 24, 1915, p. 116.)

We will not comment on this statement ourselves. We will let a German newspaper do that for us. On January 29, 1917, the influential *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* remarked in reference to Cardinal Gasparri's words: "*The one belligerent Power against which the Vatican has officially spoken is Germany.*"

We have now only to put one question to those who are still dissatisfied with the matter or manner of the Pope's condemnation of the crime of Belgium: *What neutral Power except the Pope has officially condemned the violation of Belgian neutrality at all?*

(c) The mention of two minor points will serve to exhaust the significance of the Latapie affair, and will incidentally provide us with a *third* instance of a Papal protest against the German treatment of Belgium. The first is, that, together with the Cardinal Secretary's note to M. Van den Heuvel, the Pope's reply to the Archbishop of Paris contained a second note, also from Cardinal Gasparri, addressed to the British Minister at Rome. In it the Cardinal emphatically denies that the Pope asserted to M. Latapie (as that writer stated in *Liberté*), that the British blockade of Germany was an illegitimate act of war. (See *Tablet*, *loc. cit.*) The second is, that, in order to remove the false impression created by M. Latapie's statements, the Pope, a few weeks after their publi-

cation, granted a second interview, this time to M. Laudet, Director of the *Revue Hebdomadaire*. To him he said:

"At the beginning of the bombardment of the Cathedral of Reims We charged the Cardinal Archbishop of Cologne to convey Our protest to the German Emperor.

. . . *I condemn strongly the martyrdom of the poor Belgian priests* and so many other horrors on which light has been cast." (The Month, August, 1915, p. 186.)

So far, our endeavor has been to show that it is untrue, even on the evidence of the Germans themselves, to assert that the Pope has not condemned the violation of Belgium, but in the course of our discussion of the Latapie incident we have had to refer to other pronouncements of the Holy See, showing the benevolence of its attitude towards the Allies. To supplement these we now propose to cite three further clear instances of Papal action deserving the gratitude of the Allies. They concern (1) aerial bombardments; (2) the treatment of prisoners of war; (3) the recent Belgian deportations.

(1) The first of these three acts can be briefly dismissed. Last October the open town of Padua was bombarded from the air by an Austrian flight-squadron. On receiving the news of this outrage the Pope sent a liberal subscription for the relief of the sufferers from the bombardment, and at the same time expressed his reprobation of such bombardments "by whomsoever they are committed." The condemnation of Austria here is not to be gainsaid. For anyone in an Allied country to take offense at the last words would be to confess to a guilty conscience. So long as we do not emulate the Prussian method of bombarding defenseless cities we are not touched by the Pope's words. (Mention might also be made in this connection of a similar message of condolence sent by the Holy See to Venice on an earlier occasion. But as the Pontiff's language was more explicit in his message to Padua we have preferred to select the second incident for notice.)

(2) Our second case is the organized relief of prisoners of war. It is unfortunate that, owing to a certain inapti-

tude for self-advertisement which the Vatican has displayed, not for the first time, during this war, precise details of the magnificent work it has done in ascertaining the whereabouts of prisoners of war, and, where possible, improving their condition and securing their exchange, are not to be obtained without great difficulty. But many cases are known in which the Holy See has done service to English families by discovering the places of confinement to which their relations had been taken, and occasionally even securing the release of wounded prisoners. Only a few weeks ago English newspapers published the information that Cardinal Gasparri had telegraphed to the Apostolic Delegate at Constantinople, Mgr. Dolci, instructing him to ascertain the details of the reported capture of Mr. Bonar Law's son by Ottoman troops, and to obtain leave, if possible, to communicate with him. (It appears since that the Apostolic Delegate was successful in obtaining the required information.)

(3) A third and most striking case is the Pontiff's successful intervention to secure the return of the victims of the Belgian deportations. On April 4 the following message was transmitted to the English Press: "The *Corriere d'Italia* (April 2) gives the reply of the Bavarian Premier to the Pope's protest against the Belgian deportations. Count Hertling states that Germany is 'disposed to refrain from further forced deportations from Belgium to Germany and to permit the return of those who have been unjustly deported by some error.' According to the *Corriere d'Italia* this will mean the repatriation of 13,000 out of 60,000 deported workmen."

We cannot say we have noticed in the press or in Anglican pulpits any marked expressions of gratitude for this spontaneous act of friendliness. We are, instead, rather unhappily reminded of the young man in Mr. George Russell's story who received presents from his relations "which he was good enough to retain though too busy to acknowledge."

Perhaps the retort to this will be "Leave the Germans to show their gratitude to the Papacy; they have more

reason to do so." If that is the case, they must be the most singularly ungrateful people on the face of the earth. If only half of what our adversaries say were true, we might expect the German press to be ringing with praise of the Vatican. As a matter of fact here are a few flowers of compliment culled from the recent pages of the German press. (Cf. *The Tablet*, March 10.)

(1) In reference to the peace offer of the Central Powers the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* says: "A short while ago, we were eagerly awaiting the answer that the Pope would give to the peace proposals of the Central Powers. After seven weeks we must resign ourselves to this: Benedict XV has made no public pronouncement at all." More than seven weeks have passed since this was written, and if the Pope ever makes any step towards peace it will clearly not be at the instigation of the Central Powers.

(2) In reference to the intrusion of Cardinals Hartmann and v. Bettinger into the dioceses of Belgium and France occupied by Germany, the same paper writes: "The Vatican could have crushed the campaign [against these prelates] with a word, and in the view of canonists ought to have done so, since canon law was on the side of the two Germans. Nothing of the kind happened." (3) Yet again, the same German writer is of opinion that at the last distribution of cardinal's hats France came off remarkably well, while Germany and Austria were in danger of getting nothing at all.

(4) An even more important German organ, the semi-official *Kölnische Zeitung*, takes the following view of the Pope's attitude towards Italy (a matter which we will discuss more in detail lower down): "Today, in consequence of the untiring propaganda of the Allied Powers, the majority of the authoritative personages at the Vatican may be described as in full agreement with the Italian war-policy." (5) "It is hopeless," says the *Vossische Zeitung*, as a general reflection on Papal policy, "to think of paralyzing the anti-German Romanism of the Vatican." Such is the language tolerated—nay, even inspired—by the German Government against a Power which certain

circles in England would have us believe is working hand in glove with them. If these admissions of the Germans themselves do not pulverize the theory of the "pro-German Vatican," it is difficult to know what evidence would be deemed adequate for the purpose.

Let us now sum up the principal conclusions reached in this section. It has been shown that the Vatican (1) condemned the invasion and maltreatment of Belgium; (2) protested against the sacrilege of Reims; (3) pointedly refused to judge the British blockade of Germany; (4) reprobated the aerial bombardments practised in Italy by Austria; (5) gave valuable assistance to British (among other) prisoners of war; (6) secured the release of the victims of the Belgian deportations.

On the other hand, we have it on the testimony of German writers that the Pope has (1) refused to support the peace offer of the Central Powers; (2) declined to excuse the infractions of canon law committed by German prelates in the occupied territories; (3) offended German Jingoës by the proportion in which he has distributed cardinal's hats among the various belligerent Powers; (4) shown in his general policy what Germans consider an altogether undue affection for Italy. We may add on our own account a fifth point, which will undoubtedly be felt as yet another grievance in Germany. The allegation of a prominent German Catholic organ, that the recent (so-called) "International Catholic Congress" at Zurich (which was really an anti-Entente demonstration by German and Austrian Catholics) had been summoned on the initiative of the Supreme Pontiff himself, has immediately received a flat *démenti* from the *Corriere d'Italia*, an authorized exponent of Vatican policy in Italy. This congress was an ingenious move to gain an appearance of Papal support for the intrigues of the Central Powers. The Vatican, therefore, lost no time in crushing its pretensions. Looking over this record of Pontifical activities as a whole, we are inclined to agree with the German view that Papal neutrality has proved more benevolent to ourselves than to the Central Powers. This does not

prove that it is not genuine neutrality. It merely proves that no neutral can look on without protest at the crimes of Germany and her Allies.

3. THE POPE AND ITALY

Undoubtedly the argument that there is a natural hostility between the Vatican and the Entente wears its most plausible look when we come to the case of Italy. It is undeniable that twice in the last century the forces of the Holy See were in armed conflict with those of the Italian Kingdom, and that since the breach of Porta Pia on September 20, 1870, the severed diplomatic relations between the two Powers have not been restored. Again an attack upon the Papacy, based on the "Roman Question," has at the present moment in England the distinct advantage of being an attack upon adversaries who cannot defend themselves. It is so obviously undesirable to criticize the past acts of a nation fighting at our side that we are usually forced to say nothing, which looks as if we had nothing to say. One charge, however, we are perfectly justified in repelling. We can and will show that if the Pope during the war has reasserted his demand for a readjustment of his position in Rome, he has never since the war uttered one syllable, or sanctioned the utterance of one syllable, that could possibly justify the accusation that he aims at the "disruption" of Italy. We will take first the Pontiff's own statement of his claim in the Roman Question, made in the Encyclical of November 1, 1914: "All from far and near, who profess themselves sons of the Roman Pontiff, rightly demand a guarantee that the common Father of all should be, and should be seen to be, perfectly free from all human power in the administration of his Apostolic Office. And so, while earnestly desiring that peace should soon be concluded among the nations, it is also Our desire that there should be an end to the abnormal position of the Head of the Church, a position in many ways very harmful to the very peace of nations. We hereby renew, and for the same reasons, the many

protests Our Predecessors have made against such a state of things, moved thereto not by human interest, but by the sacredness of Our Office, in order to defend the rights and dignity of the Apostolic See." ("The Pope on the War," p. 9.)

These words are perfectly plain. For reasons already given it is imperative that the Pope's residence in the capital of the Italian Kingdom should not be taken as implying, even in appearance, that he is subject to, or under the protectorate of, the Italian Government. The Holy See belongs to all nations, not to any one nation, whatever its merits or glories. The Pope therefore demands a "guarantee," that is all. *He says nothing as to the nature of the guarantee, he does not even use the words "territorial guarantee."* If we require an authorized comment on this statement, we have it in the words addressed by Cardinal Gasparri to a representative of the *Corriere d'Italia* in June, 1915. "*The Holy See does not wish,*" the Cardinal said, "*to create embarrassments for the Italian Government in regard to neutrality, and places its confidence in God in its hopes for the attainment of an arrangement suitable to its situation, and [looks] not to foreign armies, but to the triumph of sentiments of justice . . . among the Italian people in conformity to its true interests.*" (*The Month*, August 15, p. 186. Italics ours).

Returning to the same subject in his Allocution of December 9, 1915, the Pope himself added these words: "We have deplored the situation of the Sovereign Pontiff, which is such that it does not allow him that full liberty which is absolutely necessary for the government of the Church. *Those governing Italy are not wanting in good intentions to eliminate these inconveniences. . . .*" ("The Pope," etc., p. 19. Italics ours.) Is this the voice of an enemy of the Italian people? Surely hostility, like ambition, should be made of sterner stuff.

It is probable that here our opponents will break ground and maintain that whatever the Pope himself may have said, his "agents" have certainly called for the "disrup-

tion" of Italy. We therefore propose to bring upon the scene a figure likely to be regarded with the utmost suspicion and alarm by the "No-Popery" Party, and to listen to his evidence. Let us hear the voice of a *German Jesuit*. Father Franz Ehrle, S.J., is an ex-prefect of the Vatican Library, and in September, 1916, he contributed to a Bavarian periodical (*Stimmen der Zeit*) an article on the Roman Question. We select his utterance because it is generally believed in Germany that it was "inspired" from Rome. This does not mean that the article is the official Vatican program, but simply that the ideas put forward in it appear to the Vatican to merit attention. We proceed to quote the account of Ehrle's views given by the famous German Catholic organ *Germania*. Father Ehrle, this paper says, "seeks a solution [of the Roman Question] which corresponds with the wishes and projects of the Pope, but does not create too great difficulties for the Italian Government. Such difficulties would, however, in Ehrle's view be involved by the restoration of the original States of the Church, the return of the whole city of Rome to the Pope, or even the cession of that part of the town lying on the right bank of the Tiber together with a strip of the campagna leading to a seaport. *The Pope has no such solutions in view*, since each of the three plans mentioned could only be attained by force of arms or forcible pressure upon the Italian Government. On the other hand, Ehrle believes that a small ecclesiastical State consisting of the present Vatican territory, with an insignificant extension to round it off, would be in harmony with the wishes of the Pope."

We will not here dispute the opinion of those who say that to ask even what Ehrle does is an insult and an injury to Italy. We only submit that the blow at her integrity, if such there be, is extremely slight. In fact it amounts to little more than the regularizing of existing conditions. The Vatican, now *de facto* extra-territorial, is, with the addition of a few adjoining buildings, to become *de jure* independent. We do not say this ought to be done, we merely deny that it involves the disruption of

Italy. And, so far as our knowledge goes, *this is the only step approaching a demand for the restoration of the temporal power which has been even indirectly sanctioned by the Vatican during the present war.* If this is the "dream of empire" with which the Pope is charged, there seems little reason for the kings of the earth to rise up and take counsel together. And until they do so, do we really need self-appointed Committees of Vigilance?

NOTE.—A prominent Swiss Catholic organ, the *Basler Volksblatt* (March 14), has stated that at the Zurich Congress, alluded to above, "By the special wish of the Apostolic See, discussion on the Roman Question was completely excluded."

4. THE "HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE"

The contention that the Pope is trying to recover by foreign arms a position in Italy which the sense of justice of the Italian people at present refuses to accord him, has at least one merit. It is a clear and definite charge that can be met by the production of counter evidence. But how are we to reply to statements like the following? "If you would look for the source of the projected Austrian revival, you must go to the palace that flanks St. Peter's; from the Hill of the Vatican the revival proceeds; and it is nothing else than the ghost of the Holy Roman Empire." (*New Age*, p. 485. March 22, 1917.) Or to this: "He [the Pope] is bound to labor for the ultimate supremacy of the Roman See in the political world, and to use this tremendous claim to spiritual jurisdiction over the conscience of mankind [i.e., the Vatican Decrees], in order to secure that political pre-eminence, which would really be of more value than the temporal power, which the nations have refused and the Roman Curia has been shrewd enough to see may be abandoned, at least for the present, with advantage." ("The Pope and the Conscience of Christendom," by the Rev. Arnold Pinchard, p. 8). Or to this: "The Latin Church is one-

half of that Imperial Tyranny of which Germany aspires to reconstruct the other half. (Dean Inge in the *Guardian*, October, 1916).

All these writers, without adducing as much as a single *pièce justificative*, attribute to the Papacy vast and shadowy schemes of European and world empire, which sound more like romantic fiction (or even cinema-drama advertisements) than practical politics. The "ghost of the Holy Roman Empire" certainly haunts the writers we have quoted. But why should we believe it haunts the Pope until they show some evidence for it?

For, *a priori*, one would expect the memory of the Holy Roman Empire to be a nightmare rather than an alluring vision to the Vatican. That long and bloody tragedy, which opened so gloriously with the coronation of Charlemagne in St. Peter's, and culminated with such unspeakable horror in the sack and profanation of Rome by the Lutheran mercenaries of the Emperor Charles V, was, we will not say the great miscalculation, but certainly the great disillusion of the Papacy. That the Popes should wish to repeat the experiment, that the Austrian Court, which a century ago deliberately stripped itself of the insignia of the Roman Empire because of the weight of responsibility they involved, should today wish to resume the burden of them, is in the abstract possible (as all things are); but in the concrete vastly improbable. In fact we are sure that Kaiser Karl is worrying far more about the Czechs than the Romans, and setting much higher hopes on the South Slavs than the Seven Electors.

We do not know if the Holy Father cherishes in his heart any especial affection for Austria, because, despite her long list of crimes against the Church's independence, the last of which was her interference in the conclave of 1903, she still remains an avowed Roman Catholic country. If he did, only insensate bigots could blame him. But when it is supposed that the Papacy necessarily looks to Austria for *political* as well as *religious* support, we think that the idea rests on a popular misreading of cer-

tain facts of nineteenth-century history, the true character of which it is worth while to recall.

So long as Austria held provinces in Italy, she was bound to be in conflict with the movement for Italian unity, and with the Piedmontese Power which led that movement. And since the States of the Church also formed an obstacle to Piedmont, it was natural for Austria to wish that they should remain in being. But when from these undoubted facts it is deduced that Austria desired to maintain the Temporal Power *for its own sake*, a great mistake is made. Austria preferred the independence of the States of the Church to their annexation by the growing Italian Kingdom, but to both these solutions *she preferred their annexation to herself*. Accordingly, when her Italian power finally collapsed in 1867, *she watched the incorporation of Rome in united Italy with complete equanimity*.

Now for the proof of these assertions. It shall be taken from a source that our opponents will not suspect, viz., the pages of the anti-clerical historian of United Italy, Mr. Bolton King. At the Congress of Vienna (1815), says this writer, Metternich proposed on behalf of Austria "to abolish the Temporal Power in her favor," and, when that failed, thanks to the diplomacy of Cardinal Consalvi, attempted to "secure a slice of Romagna" from the Pope. ("History of Italian Unity," I, p. 9.) This effort at spoilation was similarly defeated, and Austria had to content herself with the right to garrison certain towns in the States of the Church, an arrangement for which not the Pope alone but the whole of Europe was responsible.

The next pretext for aggression upon Papal rights was the honorable effort made by Pius IX to introduce constitutional government for his dominions in 1848. Metternich, to check the rising tide of Liberalism, at once demanded that the Austrian troops should be allowed to take possession of Romagna. The reply of Rome was, in Mr. King's words, a "curt refusal"; whereupon the Austrian troops advanced and seized the town. "A thrill

of indignation," says Mr. King, "ran through Italy at the insult offered the Pope." (*Ib.*, p. 183).

During the ensuing turmoil of 1848-49 Austria was forced to play a subordinate part in Italian affairs, and it was the troops of the French Republic that restored the Pope to the throne from which he had been driven. In the crisis of 1859-60 Austria had her hands too full in the north to think of the States of the Church, and Garibaldi's invasion of the Patrimony of Peter in 1867 was repelled by French, Belgian and Irish volunteers, assisted by a division of the French army again. In the preceding year, by the cession of Venice, Austria's Italian hopes had been definitely crushed. Accordingly we find that, to secure the alliance of the new Italian Kingdom in place of its enmity, the Austrian Chancellor Beust, "was willing to grant all the Italian demands; he warmly urged that Italy should be allowed to occupy Papal territory." (*Ib.*, II, p. 389.)

The last stage of this history was the occupation of Rome on September 20, 1870, by the Italian Government. France at that moment was neither able nor willing to interfere. What, then, was Austria's attitude? "Austria," says Mr. King, "reassured by the [Italian] Government's scheme of guarantees, readily consented." (*Ib.*, II, p. 375).

We have already insisted on the groundlessness of the notion that the Pope is planning to bring back the "Holy Roman Empire," or to restore by force of arms his temporal power in Italy. But suppose for one moment he entertained these projects, would prudence suggest that Austria was a safe partner? We fancy the Vatican would recognize in time that it was far more likely to prove the dupe than the gainer.

5. PAPAL AND PRUSSIAN

Probably the main argument of our last chapter will not meet with serious opposition. It will be recognized that as a definitely Roman Catholic Government the Dual

Monarchy is bound to arouse certain sympathies at the Vatican, but the idea of the Austrian Empire (have we not been taught to call it a "ramshackle Empire"?) setting up a theocratic tyranny over all Europe will be admitted to be improbable, and it will be owned that the "Holy Roman Empire" is a trifle *démodé*. "But look at Germany!" we shall be told instead. "She is not ramshackle; she is not out of date. What a fearful prospect, were she to conclude a fighting alliance with Rome!"

"Papal and Prussian," the words sound very well together. Do they not express a fundamental community of ideals? As a writer already quoted put it: "These two perils, Prussian and Papal, are twin aspects of the one materialistic enemy of mankind." Or in the more scholarly language of the Dean of St. Paul's: "We . . . are fighting against that terrible organization in every part of the world. The sympathy of the Vatican with German ideas and German practices is no accident."

We suppose the idea that lies behind such language is of this kind. "The Roman Church is organized as an ecclesiastical monarchy and vigorously upholds the principle of religious authority. The German Empire is the secular monarchy that seems to have most life in it today, and it fanatically maintains the principle of State despotism. Like tends to like, so the Pope must love the Kaiser."

The argument appears thin; but we will not trouble over that. We will simply raise the question: What *kind* of monarchy is the German Empire? To begin with it is emphatically a Protestant Power, and those who believe that a word from the Kaiser would ensure the submission of his Protestant subjects to Rome must be singularly ignorant of the realities of the religious conflict in Germany. Again, what is the real inspiration of modern German policy? Not tyranny for its own sake—that can be found without going to Berlin—but *national egoism*. Of all Powers the German Empire is the most narrowly nationalistic; of all Powers the Papacy is the most international. In the last century it was pre-

cisely for its alleged blindness to the claims of nationality that the Holy See was most fiercely attacked. The Papacy could only work in harmony with the German Empire by transforming the Catholic Church into a German Church. Only invincible ignorance or bad faith could attribute that intention to Benedict XV.

We are not, however, left to our own private interpretation of the spirit that guides the Germany of today. It will scarcely be denied that, more than any other thinkers, Heinrich Treitschke has molded the thought of the rulers of that country for the past half-century. We have purposely refrained from speculating on the private beliefs of the Kaiser, but we should be surprised if the ideas of Treitschke had not formed the staple of his education as of that of all the Prussian governing class. This philosopher's view of the Roman Church in its relation to German ideals is amply set forth in the pages of his book on "Politics." A few quotations will suffice to show its nature:

"The historic development of the Papacy typifies the growth of Christian theocracy, and clearly shows how incompatible are its intellectual restrictions with the essential spirit of Christianity. It is distressing that the greatest oracle of Christian thought during the Middle Ages, St. Augustine, should have employed his genius to establish upon a logical basis the anti-Christian doctrine of the *Civitas Dei*; that the Kingdom which is not of this world is also the most glorious in the world. Among the liberty-loving peoples of the West, whose march is towards enlightenment, such claims must in the long run provoke universal opposition." . . . ("Pol.," II, p. 42. English tr.) "The Catholic Church has at all times striven for a system which in theory is contradictory enough: the subjection of the State to the Church." (*Ib.*, I, p. 339.) Dare the Pope's worst enemy allege that he is willing to abandon this fundamental Catholic principle today in deference to the spiritual heirs of Treitschke? And again: "Broadly speaking, Protestantism is the form of Christianity suited to Ger-

many." (*Ib.*, I, p. 361.) This is the official philosophy of the Prussian system. Were Treitschke or his English admirer Cramb alive today, we should love to hear their comments on the "Papal and Prussian" theory!

Nor has the practice of Germany in the least belied her theory. The Germans have always shown themselves sons of Luther. Who formed the backbone of the opposition at the Vatican Council?—The Germans. Even the *Times* correspondent in Rome—the Rev. T. Mozley, who was no friend of the Ultramontanes—was disgusted at the tone and methods of the German Fronde at the Council. Who created the Old Catholic schism after the Council?—The Germans. What was the most savage persecution endured by the Roman Church in the latter part of the nineteenth century? The *Kulturkampf* waged by the German Empire. Who expressed the wish that the States of the Church could be restored in order that he might apply methods of "blood and iron" to reduce the opposition of the Pope? Prince Bismarck. (In fact he actually asked leave of the Italian Government to land a German force at Civita Vecchia to sack the Vatican.) If these acts have been counterbalanced by any signal service rendered to the Papacy by the German State, we should be glad to learn when and where this happened. The records of history, at least, are silent on it. In fact the whole legend of German deference to the Vatican seems to us to be based on this single fact: *the Germans have always had the sense to recognize that the Vatican is a European Power, and should be approached as such.* Germany's treatment of the Holy See has not differed widely from her treatment of most civilized Powers. It has been a record of coarse bullying. Germany has not, however, committed the blunder of ignoring the Vatican by reason of theological fanaticism or childish ecclesiastical nationalism. That is the one point she scores in the controversy—the fault is with those who have needlessly let her score it.

There are few signs, then, of identity of aim between Prussia and the Papacy. Do we find, surveying the

world at large, that where there is Roman Catholicism there is sympathy with the ambitions of Germany? Let us first compare the two belligerent groups. Of Germany's three Allies *one* is Roman Catholic, viz. Austria-Hungary. The Alliance against Germany counts France, Belgium, Italy, and Portugal—*four* Catholic countries, two of them great Powers, and one signalized by the Holy Father himself for its devotion to the Apostolic See. (It may be said that the French Government is not Catholic. But it cannot be said that the French Catholics are less hostile to Germany than other sections of the population. As to Italy, our adversaries are always the first to assure us, when the question of the Pope's position in Rome is raised, that it is not animated by anti-Catholic feelings.) If we turn to the neutral world we find not many Catholic Powers left—the Entente has absorbed so many of them. But if we turn to the Republics of Latin America we find some of them on the verge of joining our Alliance, nearly all in a state of protest or ferment against the Central Powers. Spain only is left, and though it is unfortunately true that large sections of the Spanish clergy sympathize with Germany, the two highest ecclesiastical authorities in the country have both in their public utterances revealed their detestation of German methods. The first of them, Cardinal Guisasola, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain, declared in his Pastoral, last March:

"For more than a century a mass of absurd theories has guided the conduct and government of nations. Might has been held to be right, accomplished facts have been endowed with the sanctity of right, the so-called principle of 'no intervention' acclaimed as a dogma, morality been detached from politics, self-interest held as the supreme law, the abolition of weak nations proclaimed, the elimination of the aged and cripples advocated as in barbarous times, imperialist aspirations fostered, and formidable armaments prepared, to give to one nation the dominion of the whole world."

While the second, the Archbishop of Tarragona, who

ranks next to the Primate, last autumn expressed his sympathy for France, and his regret for the Germanophil tendencies of a section of the lower clergy—a section which, in his view, was smaller than usually supposed.

The notion that Roman Catholicism is always found in alliance with Prussianism thus finds singularly little support when tested by the *facts* of the situation. And equally futile is the allegation that Roman Catholicism is always found in alliance with despotism. For there have really only been two first-class despotisms in power during the present war. One of these is the German Empire and that is Protestant. The other was the Russian Tsardom which bitterly persecuted the Latin Church. (If anyone wishes to include the Dual Monarchy we make them a present of the admission. We have shown how much its political fidelity to Rome is worth.) As a matter of fact, the more we keep to the concrete facts and the less we blind ourselves by the hatreds of the past, the better the prospects of an improvement in the relations between the Entente Powers and the Vatican appear. It will be enough to take three crucial instances—(1) Russia; (2) Poland, and (3) Turkey.

(1) The transformation of Russia by Revolution has been a direct consequence of the war. It has been enthusiastically welcomed both in France and England. In spite of the "tendencious" messages to the contrary which were immediately circulated through the English press from interested quarters, this Revolution is bound to be recognized at the Vatican as one of the happiest events for the Latin Church that modern history records. The policy of religious freedom inaugurated by the new régime releases the Roman Church in Russia from a long and exasperating bureaucratic tyranny, while at the same time it guarantees the Uniate Rites in communion with Rome against any repetition of such a shameful persecution as that carried out in Galicia by the old régime during the present war. (Critics, who think the Pope was not emphatic enough in his protests against the treatment of Cardinal Mercier, should remember that

his method of dealing with the case of the Uniate prelate, Mgr. Sceptycki, infamously ill-used by the reactionary Governor of Galicia, was equally unobtrusive.) In short Russia's adhesion to the ideals of the Western Powers has meant the dawn of a new day for the Latin Communion in Russia. The Vatican will not, we believe, fail to observe the sequence of cause and effect.

(2) It has been well understood everywhere since the very beginning of the war that if the erection of a genuinely free, united and independent Poland was to be one of the results of it, this would be the work of the Allies. Whatever doubts were felt as to the sincerity of the promises made by the old régime, have vanished since the institution of a democratic Government in Russia. The counter-offer made by Germany, which included the enthronement of a foreign prince in Poland and the permanent subjection of parts of the Polish nation to the Prussian and Protestant yoke, was scarcely taken seriously even by those who put it forward. Poland will be restored by the Allies or it will be restored by nobody. But to create an independent Poland is to bring into the world a new and important Roman Catholic State. Is it conceivable that the Vatican does not realize this? On the contrary, it knows what it has to expect and *from whom* it has to expect it.

(3) Our last instance shall be the Turkish question. It is a fact of ghastly experience that the lives of Christians (whether of the Latin or any other communion) are only worth an instant's purchase in Turkey when they are under the protection of some Christian Power. Until the war the protection of Christian Missions in the Turkish Empire was in the hands of France. It was a privilege valued not only by French Catholics but by French politicians, and led Gambetta to make his famous aphorism "Anti-clericalism is not for export." With Turkey's entry into the war and the abolition (prompted by Germany) of the capitulations, this protectorate ceased, and the results in Armenia are known. Henceforth either the Christians are to remain permanently

at the mercy of the Turkish butcher—a solution which will never be accepted by the Vatican—or *some form of European Protectorate must be re-established*. For this purpose only two Powers come seriously into the question: France and Germany. And of these two, Germany, by the confession of her own writers, has to withdraw her candidature. *Her bargain with Turkey compels her to give the Sultan's Government a free hand in the massacre of the Christians*. As a well-known German journalist, Otto Röse, has recently confessed:

There can be no question of any sort of Christian Protectorate inconsistent with the assurances that have been given to Turkey, and it would become us, who have made a friendly alliance with Turkey, least of all to demand it, for, as experience has shown, it has been employed in the past as a weapon of coercion, and would in the future be employed again in this way, not simply against the Turkish Government, but against a section of the protected populations. For the majority of these are adherents of Powers which are hostile to us, and seek to undermine our Eastern policy. The French, the Russians, the English would shelter themselves behind their Roman Catholic, schismatic and Protestant clients in order to rouse them against us. Accordingly, as things are, no benefit to the Empire or to the Church is to be expected from a German Protectorate of the Christians in Turkey. (*Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, January 31, '16.)

In other words, Germany is not to be had for the protection of Christianity in Turkey, because it pays better to let the horrors of Turkish rule continue. That is the answer the Pope's "Ally" gives to the moving words of the Allocution of December 9, 1915. "Notwithstanding Our efforts to hasten peace and allay discord by every means, this fatal war grows in fury by land and sea, and *threatens unfortunate Armenia with complete and final ruin*." ("The Pope on the War," p. 18. *Italics ours*). Really one feels tempted to revise the words of Dean Inge and to say: "The harmony between the Entente ideal of liberation and the principles of the Catholic Church is no accident. We and our Allies are fighting on behalf of that noble organization in every part of the world."

6. "ET TU BRUTE?" A WORD TO ANGLO-CATHOLIC CIRCLES AND AN APPEAL ELSEWHERE

Our task, so far as the general reader is concerned, is now to the best of our powers accomplished. We have tried to show the vanity of the idea that there is a natural affinity between the Vatican and the Central Powers, and to emphasize instead the contrary truth that wherever the Allies are struggling for liberty and justice, there they are also defending the interests of the Catholic Church. But before we close there is a matter nearer home of which we wish to speak.

Among all the motley crowd of our assailants the sight of one figure and one alone fills us with alarm. It is that of the Anglo-Catholic, cleric and layman. From most of those who have joined up for this campaign against the Papacy no more and no less than what they have done was to be expected. The rationalist press and Bible Protestant, the collector of diplomatic gossip, the fanatic who cannot speak a panegyric of Italy without a sneer and a taunt at the Vatican, and the "High" Churchman who conceals his fundamental Protestantism behind a veil of "decent ritual," all these we were ready for, all these are in their place,—“but what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?”

We desire to take the most generous view of your conduct. We presume that jealousy for the orders and jurisdiction of the English branch of the Episcopate has brought you to a permanent suspicion of the Holy See. We desire respectfully to remind you that suspicion maketh a wise man mad. If you think that in the past you have suffered wrong from Rome, you will not make things better now by inflicting wrong. On the specific points at issue between the Primate of Christendom and ourselves this sordid quarrel at least will throw no light. The Pope would be no less the successor of St. Peter if he sided with the Germans, and no more if he revived his Zouaves to fight for the Allies.

Moreover, something greater is at stake here than the claims of a national church. It is the welfare of Christ's Body, in which one member cannot suffer without the others suffering too. We do not for a moment imagine that you realize the character of the forces you are hounding on against the Papacy at home and abroad. If you did, you would recoil from them in horror. But consider your curious bed-fellows at this moment. Do they not awake some suspicion in your mind?

We fear you hardly realize the distress and disquiet you are arousing among just those lay people who most admire your work and desire to assimilate your teaching. Quite frankly they are *not* prepared to support Catholicism in some parish in England in order to join in opposing it throughout the rest of the world. The iconoclast, the secularist, the militant atheist are no whit less displeasing to them abroad than at home, *and they will not be induced to support the persecutors and spoliators of the Church anywhere.* Painful circumstances may have severed them from the communion of the Holy See in England, but they do not for that forget that every blow at the Papacy today is a blow at the common Faith. You do not tire of telling us, and rightly too, that the delinquencies of Protestantizing authorities threaten the Church in this country with a crisis. We earnestly warn you of a crisis of another kind. If communion with the Anglican Episcopate is to be made the badge of a dishonorable warfare against our Catholic brethren of the West and against the See we have most reason to revere in Christendom, the crash will come and will not be long delayed. It is to you, the priests of the Anglo-Catholic party, that we look to avert this, not to precipitate it. Alas! *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* Why will you not let us be simply grateful to you?

We believe that the younger generation is tired of religious brawling. Titus Oates is dead, and we wish that Dr. Littledale would cease to haunt the scene. We are not ready to purchase unity by the sacrifice of any right we can fairly claim, but we are even less ready to pro-

long disunion by envenoming past quarrels. The whole secular world is in travail today, seeking to bring forth peace out of rivalry. The Spirit of God moves again on the face of the waters and surely the Church will feel His celestial fire. If the call to reunion is to come in our days, it can only be from the *principium unitatis*, the Guardian of the Vine. We know not if Rome is preparing the words of peace, but we would that our loins were girded and all things ready. Till then our eyes are turned to the Chief Shepherd. We wait for the voice from the Tomb of Peter and Paul. Amid our unhappy divisions, East and West, our appeal is still to the Primatial See: "*Transiens in Macedoniam adjuva nos.*"

Appendix

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE POPE AND PRISONERS OF WAR

The efforts of the Pope have been conducted both on behalf of prisoners in general and also in favor of individuals.

A proposal for the general exchange of prisoners unfit for military service was made by his Holiness to the Sovereigns and heads of States of the belligerent Powers on December 31, 1914. All the Governments accepted, but in practice it was only found possible to carry out the exchange as between France, Belgium, Great Britain and Russia on the one side and Germany on the other. An agreement was subsequently concluded between Italy and Austro-Hungary and has been in operation for some time past.

The Pope then took up the question of invalid and wounded prisoners, and in May, 1915, opened negotiations with the belligerent States with a view to such prisoners being interned in neutral countries. The negotiations with the French, Swiss and German Governments were successful, and several thousand of these prisoners have been interned and tended in Switzerland.

In 1915 the Pope made a further appeal in order that they should agree to allow the strict observance of Sunday rest for prisoners of war. All the Governments adhered to this proposal.

In April, 1916, the Pope put forward a plan for interning in a neutral country, after eighteen months' captivity, the fathers

of at least three children. The Vatican warmly urged the matter but negotiations have been delayed owing to certain practical difficulties. Nevertheless it has been found possible to accommodate a certain number of these prisoners in Switzerland by way of experiment, and it is hoped that before long arrangements will be made on a larger scale.

An "Office in favor of prisoners of war" was opened in December, 1914, as a department under the [Papal] Secretary of State. This office, for the benefit of prisoners of all belligerents alike, makes enquiries regarding missing soldiers and investigations of every kind in regard to their condition.

When reprisals on prisoners were threatened the Pope intervened by proposing to the various Governments that they should abstain from all measures of this kind.

As regards spiritual matters the Pope has recommended Bishops to look after prisoners' camps in their dioceses, has sent representatives to visit camps and has granted special powers to chaplains.

Material assistance has been given in the form of provisions to French prisoners, of Christmas presents to Italians, of Easter presents to Austrians and of gifts distributed by the Apostolic Delegate at Constantinople to the French and English prisoners in Turkey.

Inter alia, the Pope has frequently intervened on behalf of individual prisoners with a view to their release or confinement in more suitable conditions, especially as regards health, has been instrumental in establishing technical courses and libraries for students, and has promoted the unrestricted exchange of priests.

The Cardinal's Disclaimer

NOT long since the *London Morning Post* basely calumniated the Holy Father by printing a list of his supposed machinations against the Allies. To add effect to the accusation the paper called upon the English Government "to demand that the Pope state definitely on which side he stood." Four days after, Cardinal Gasparri met these charges and those printed in the more shabby New York papers by the following statement:

The Holy Father is not preparing any new appeal looking toward peace. His earnest desire, many times manifested, for a just, Christian, and durable peace is unchanged and cannot change. Who can crave anything else and call himself a Christian? To say that his Holiness favors, or has favored, or will favor an unjust, un-Christian and temporary peace is not only false, but also absurd. Any propaganda for such a peace, alleged to be conducted at the Vatican's inspiration, especially in certain nations, is the product of pure malice. A "chain of prayer" has always been reprobated by the Holy See, and bishops and priests in the United States of America and elsewhere are warned against them, particularly those having any such propaganda behind them. Also, American Catholics and others are cautioned that such prayers are a species of superstition.

The Catholic Church has always regarded true patriotism as a Christian duty and a Christian virtue, and still so teaches. The fact that the Italian Parliament has had warm eulogies for the clergy should be sufficient to refute the calumnies which irresponsible persons have circulated and are circulating in the foreign world. Malicious insinuations propagated in America and the tendency to attribute in great part to the Italian clergy responsibility for the recent situation must be denounced. In Italy no fair-minded person is attributing the situation to the clergy.

When the disruptive propaganda began to affect the morale of the Italian army, the clergy in general, and also the army chaplains, following the instructions and the example of the Chaplain-in-Chief, labored to counteract it and elevate the morale of the troops. More than once the army chaplains informed the Chaplain-in-Chief, who informed the supreme civil authorities, of the disruptive movement that was creeping in—and all that long before the publication of the Papal note. The true causes of the recent Italian reverses are perfectly well understood in Italy, and

the shoulders on which rests the responsibility for the reverses are well known, a responsibility which certainly does not touch Catholics, the clergy, and, least of all, the august person of the Sovereign Pontiff. In one case the Holy See ordered the suppression of a newspaper containing imprudent observations.

Finally, is it necessary to repeat that the Pontifical appeal, which some have ignorantly criticized, was addressed to the chiefs of the Governments for consideration in the official chancelleries? The governmental authorities first gave it to the press, and the public. The Holy See published and commented on it in the *Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's official organ, only when the false interpretations of others, whether innocent or wilful, made such action necessary.

It is to be hoped that this frank, manly statement will bring about a temporary cessation of the calumnies uttered against the Holy Father.